Comicalities in Plants.

[Floral Cabinet]

There is Jack-in-the Pulpit; the flower of the plant known as Indian Turnip (Arisæma triphyllum), who could ever look at one of these singular blossoms without that same stirring of the risible faculties which one experiences in perusing a parody or caricature, or witnessing a pantomime? The very sight of one is provocative of mirth. How many times in my school days did I challenge the teacher's frown by involuntary giggles at the whimsical look of the imprisoned Jack! Monk's hood, of the genius aconitum, has quaint, comical flowers, suggestive of an old lady's head in a night cap. The well-known Flytrap, Dionœa muscipula strikes the mind with all the effect of a joke. The leaves of this plant are fringed with stiff bristles and fold together when certain hairs on their upper surface are touched, thus seizing insects that light on them. Seeing the leaf stand temptingly open a poor fly pops in for shelter or food; no sooner has it touched its feet than some sensitive fibres are affected, and the cilia at the top closes in upon the intruder, imprisoning him as effectually as if a boy had taken him and closed him in a box. The Pitcher-plant or Monkey-cap of the East, although not particularly ludicrous has a whimsical arrangement which borders closely upon the human economy. To the footstalk of each leaf of this plant, near the base, is attached a kind of bag, shaped like a pitcher, of the same consistence and color as the leaf in the earlier state of its growth, but changing with age to a reddish purple. It is girt around with an oblique band or hoop, and covered with a lid neatly fitted, and movable on a kind of hinge or strong fiber, which, passing over the handle, connects the vessel with the leaf. By the shrinking or contracting of this fiber the lid is drawn open whenever the weather is showery or damp. When sufficient moisture has fallen and the pitcher saturated, the cover falls down so firmly that evaporation cannot ensue. The water is thus gradually absorbed through the handle in the footstalk of the leaf giving substance and vigor to the plant. As soon as the pitchers are exhausted the lids again open to admit whatever moisture may fall; and when the plant has produced its seed, and the dry season fairly sets in, it withers, with all the covers of the pitchers standing open. The flower of the bee orchis is like a piece of honeycomb, and the bees delight in it. Then there is the snap dragon; the corolla of which is cleft and turned back so as to look like a rabbit's mouth, especially if pinched on the sides, when the animal appears as if nibbling. The flower of the cock's comb and the seed pod of the mostynia proboscidea bear curious resemblance to the objects which have suggested their names. Some kinds of the mendicago have also curious seed pods, some being like beehives, some like caterpillars, and some like hedgehogs—the last being itself an essentially ludicrous object.

The Belles of Florence.

[Florence Letter.]

The belles of Florence have great beauty and fascination, and certainly our own country women and many of the English are as much admired. Everybody seems to dress well, but the display of family jewels among the Italian aristocracy is something fabulous. They are always inherited by the oldest son, whose wife has a particularly good time displaying them as long as she lives, and then, alas, they are to illumine the shoulders of the ever dreaded daughter-in-law.

After the supper and during cotillon, refreshments are passed around and partaken of freely, and at 8, or later in the morning, a hot breakfast refreshes the guests, whose carriages have been ordered at 10, or in some cases not until noon. I know an instance of a gentleman who left his wife at 1 o'clock to dance, went home to bed, and came back to breakfast with her at 9 o'clock on hot coffee, chops, green peas and other delicacies of the season. You will hardly realize such a state of social excess, but it is an entirely true picture, and given me by the lady who herself gave the entertainment referred to.

The women who give themselves up to this life of so called pleasure night after night expect to sleep all day until time to dress and lunch and dine, and make a few late calls just before 7 o'clock dinner, after which they usually go to bed again to prepare for another midnight carousal. A married belle has usually five admirers who contract to dance with no one but herself, and her dancing steps are equally circumscribed. There are enough men, however, whose feet are free to fly around with the younger maidens or other married ladies who wish to give or receive only general attention.

The Inroads of Civilization.

A very graphic and pathetic description of the inroads soon to be made by civilization is given by an old man in Tennessee:

"But this hyur country's all a goin' to change. It's goin' to be most everlastin'ly improved, you see. I shan't never be improved; I'm too old. But the old ways is coming to an end. They's men buyin' up thousan's of acres of this land. They'll be railroads built directly, hither an' yan, more'n'll do anybody any good. They'll cut off the woods for fuel an' lumber, an' they'll be mines an' quarries up hyur, they say. An' they'll be mean, dirty little towns laid out, all about. Then, instid' o' people drinkin' a little healthy whisky, as we've always done, they'll be forty times as much miserable pison stuff sold an' drunk, an' whoever drinks it'll begin to steal an' lie.

"I reckon they'll be some mighty fine houses built som'eres along this river, an' they'll put big scientific locks on to their doors, an' thieves will come up from Cincinnater and Chat'noog', an' break into 'em. They aint never been a lock to a door in these mountains. But they's goin' to be the all-firedest improvements about hyur, an' I s'pose our people'll l'arn to steal too; haf to to keep up an' live. An' they'll be some o' them city women hyur, I reckon, from big places, with their fine feathers, an' their dresses a draggin' on to the ground, an' they'll be the devil to pay among our young men. That's what they call civ'lization, ain't it, stranger? I tell you this country will soon be improvin' like hell, but I shan't live to see much of it, I reckon.

The Slaughtering of Cattle.

The process of killing and dressing beef at the stock yards, says a contemporary, is not as expeditious and wonderful in character as is that of killing and dressing hogs. The features most noticeable are the two methods used in killing the animals at the start.

One of these methods is through the use of the rifle, and the other the lance. In both the animals are driven singly from the yard into a narrow box stall open at the top. A dozen of these stalls are in a row, and over their tops are laid some loose planks on which the slayer walks with rifle or lance in hand. In the case of the rifle the executioner puts a ball into the animal's brain at short range, which kills instantly. Not a groan is heard, not a muscle moves. The animal falls like a lump of lead, and is at once dragged from the stall into the slaughter-house, where the throat is cut and the process of dressing is completed.

Turning a Happy Phrase.

[Maurice Thompson.]

The art of turning a "happy phrase" and of using words with more regard to picturesqueness than to genuine thought expression, has been forced to such a degree of nicety that it may well be doubted whether the fiber of literature is as good to-day as it was fifty or a hundred years ago. The right word and the well-wrought phrase have a value that we all prize; but the "yarn is worth more than the knitting," as our grandmothers used to say. Straining after humor is one serious hindrance to the development of a good style. Genuine humor is so precious, and, therefore, so desirable an ingredient for seasoning literary dishes, that we're willing to overlook some evidence of nervousness in the style of those writers who feel the need of extra exertion on their part to show at least a modicum of this saving salt; but humor refuses to exhale from mere drollery of phrasing. One is safe in saying that wherever there is a show of struggling for expression on the surface of style, there is a very shallow spot of thought. The surf is noisest where it feathers out on the sand.

Courting Sticks.

In the early New England days, as far back as the middle of the 18th century, when hospitality was a practice as well as a virtue, there was in most houses only one small assembly room, and there the family and all the guests and chance callers gathered on winter nights about the blazing fire logs.

We know that youth was youth and love was love, and young men were timid and maidens were shy, and courtship went on in those days.

How was courtship possible in this common room, where every word was heard and every look taken notice of?

We read that in the winter evenings for the convenience of young lovers since there was no "next" room, courting sticks were used; that is, long wooden tubes that could convey from lip to ear sweet and secret whispers.

It is a charming picture that this calls up of life in a Puritan household, this tubular lovemaking, the pretty girl (nearly every girl is pretty in the firelight of long ago) seated in one stiff high-back chair, and the staid but blushing lover in another room handling the courting-stick, itself an open confession of complacence, if not of true love. Would the young man care to say, "I love you," through a tube, and would he feel encouraged by the laughing, tender eyes of the girl when she replied through the same passage, "Do tell!" Did they have two sticks, so that one end of one could be at the ear and the end of the other at the mouth all the while?

How convenient, when the young man got more ardent than was seemly, as the flip went round, for the girl to put her thumb over the end of the tube and stop the flow of soul!

Did the young man bring his stick; and so announce his intention, or did the young lady always keep one or a pair on hand; and so reveal both willingness and expectation?

It was much more convenient than the telephone, with its "hello" and proclamation to all listners at the end of the line.

Disappearance of the School-Master.

[Century.]

It is the excessive amount of system in our wholesale methods of teaching that prevents the best results in any department. The pressure of quantity does not give the teacher time to mold character. Dr. Arnold himself could not have been Dr. Arnold if he had been required by a board of education to teach the greatest possible amount of arithmetic and geography within a given time. It is probable that Dr. Arnold would have been considered wanting in the requirements of an American school-teacher of the present day. It is certain he would have found himself hopelessly trammeled, as many an aspiring teacher finds himself trammeled, by the expectations of his employers.

The teacher who would fain be less of a machine—who would like to take time to do some thorough training, and to develop the men and women of the future—gets no opportunity. He must bring the largest possible crop of arithmetic and geography at the end of the year; all his better work in building character will count for nothing with the "Board."

Then there are hobby-riders, seeking to drive into the already over-crowded course some special study. The arts of design are often useful in a business way, therefore drawing shall be universally exacted of the pupils. Music is charming at home, therefore the vocal teacher must have place.

In one considerable city, a wealthy merchant in the Board of Education who found telegraphy valuable in his own office, has succeeded in putting every boy and girl in the town to clicking telegraph keys.

But, no matter what is put into the course, it is rare that anything is taken out. The school-master finds no place on which to stand. His individuality is utterly repressed. He is a mere cog-wheel in a great machine. He sinks down at last to the level mediocrity which machines always produce; he becomes a hearer of lessons, a marker of registers, a worker for examination week. It is not chiefly his fault that he does not do higher work. There is hardly space for it, and there is no market for it.

Bananas and Plantains.

A pound of bananas contains more nutriment than three pounds of meat or many pounds of potatoes, while as a food it is in every sense of the word far superior to the best wheaten bread. Although it grows spontaneously throughout the Tropics, when cultivated its yield is prodigious, for an acre of ground planted with bananas will return, according to Humboldt, as much food material as thirty-three acres of wheat or over one hundred acres of potatoes. The banana, then, is the bread of millions, who could not well subsist without it. In Brazil it is the principal food of the laboring classes, while it is no less prized in the Island of Cuba. Indeed, in the latter country the sugar-planters grow orchards of it expressly for the consumption of their slaves. Every day each hand receives his ration of salt fish or dried beef, as the case may be, and four bananas and two plantains. The banana—it should be called plantain, for until lately there was no such word as banana—is divided into several varieties, all of which are used for food. The platino mauzanito is a small, delicate fruit, neither longer nor stouter than a lady's forefinger. It is the most delicious and prized of all the varieties of the plantain. El platino guineo, called by us the banana, is probably more in demand than any other kind. It is subdivided into different varieties, the principal of which are the yellow and purple bananas we see for sale in our market; but the latter is so little esteemed by the natives of the Tropics that it is seldom eaten by them. El platino grande—known to us as simply the plantain—is also subdivided into varieties which are known by their savor and their size. The kind that reaches our market is almost ten inches long, yet on the Isthmus of Darien there are plantains that grow from eighteen to twenty-two inches. They are never eaten raw, but are either boiled or roasted, or are prepared as preserves.

Things That Are Chained

[Denver Opinion.]

As I came down stairs this morning from my room in the hotel where I have been stopping the first thing that struck my eye as I emerged from the hallway to the street was the door-mat, thoughtfully held in position by means of a chain, and made fast to the bottom step with a lock and key. I am an old stager, my son, and have come to look with quiet, enduring philosophy on many things I am compelled to meet in life. On general principles I expect men to cheat, and lie, and steal, and even those whom I know to be upright and honest, and in whom I repose absolute trust, could not surprise me much in its violation. But, for all that, whenever I am brought suddenly face to face with such glaring evidences of distrust as the one I have just mentioned, I am always startled and grieved at their sight—to see, for instance, the cup always chained to the fountain; the comb and brush chained to the wall in the wash-room at the hotels; the time-lock on the bank vault, which neither the President, nor the cashier, nor the confidential clerk, may open, but which, with a blind disregard of friendship, faith or religion, holds its grip until the whole Board of Trustees, if necessary, can get together and see its ponderous and unfeeling hinges swing open in the morning; or the sacred ballot-box, sacred as the conservator of the rights and liberties of a free people, not one of whom can be trusted alone, with access to its contents, and consequently having, as the improved ones now do, three keys to as many different locks, so that it can only be opened in the presence of the whole Returning Board. All these ingenious safeguards, coarsely hinting at our common distrust of ourselves, are painful and disagreeable to me; and, old and experienced as I am in the generally devilish inclination of the world, they always leave an uncomfortable impression on my mind when they are obtruded on my sight.

Newspaper Troubles.

[Cincinnati Review.]

The newspaper business is very exacting on all connected with it, and the pay is comparatively small; the proprietors risk more money for smaller profits, and the editors, reporters, and printers work harder and cheaper than the same number of men in any other profession requiring the given amount of intelligence, training and drudgery.

The life has its charms and pleasant associations, scarcely known to the outside world; but it has its earnest work and anxieties and hours of exhaustion, which also are not known to those who think the business all fun.

The idea that newspaperdom is a charmed circle, where the favored members live a life of ease, and free from care, and go to the circus at night on a free ticket and travel on free passes in the summer, is an idea which should be exploded.

Business is business, and the journal that succeeds is the one that is run on a square business footing, the same as banking, building bridges or keeping a hotel.

Without being represented in its advertising columns we have had people request us to gratuitously insert this notice, or draw attention to this article, with the slight suggestion that "it will not cost you anything to put this in," which is just as ridiculous as to ask a man to grind your axe on his grind stone and graciously tell him it won't cost a cent.

It takes money to run a newspaper as well as any other business; no paper can succeed financially that carries a dead-head system. Any mention of people's affairs that they are anxious to see in print is worth paying for and when printed is generally worth as much as any other investment of the same amount.

A Great Scheme.

"No, zir, I gannod drust you fur dot pants."

"Why not, Mr. Grindstein!"

"Pecause you never vill pay me."

"I know, but I've got a scheme by which you can make some money."

"Vot ish dot?"

"You know Goldspeckle, your rival across the street?"

"Yes."

"Well, if I tell him you trusted me for a pair of pants, he'll trust me for a coat and vest, don't you see? A coat and vest are worth five times as much as a pair of pants. You'll lose only $4 while he loses $20.

"Vel' on dose gonditions you gan have der bants."

Cochineal.

Cornelius Drebble, who died in London in 1634, having placed in his window an extract of cochineal, made with boiling water, for the purpose of filling a thermometer, some aqua-regia dropped into it from a phial, broken by accident, which stood above it, and converted the purple dye into a most beautiful scarlet. After some conjecture and experiments, he discovered that the tin by which the window frame was divided into squares had been dissolved by the aqua-regia, and was the cause of the change. Giles Gobelin, a dyer at Paris used it for dying cloth. It became known as Parisian scarlet dye, and rose into such great repute that the populace declared that Gobelin had acquired his art from the devil.

"Whitey's Dead."

[N. Y. Telegram.]

"Say, boss, Whitey's dead," said a little newsboy, with an armful of papers to a patron on Park Row, New York. "You knows who Whitey was, boss," continued the newsboy, as he pocketed a nickel in exchange for a paper. "You gin him many a quarter, and he often talked about you. But he's climbed the golden stairs."

"Whitey," as he was called among his companions, was a diminutive, 12-year-old newsboy. "We calls him 'Whitey' cause he was such a white one, I tells you, boss. He wasn't like de rest of de gang. When we had a game at pitchin' pennies Whitey wouldn't pitch. 'Cause,' said he, 'my mudder needs de money.' He saved his money to help support his mudder an' little sisters. De udder night he was out late in de rain an' cotched cold, an' a fever sot in an' he had to took to his bed. Me an' Mike goes to see him de day he dies, an' he say, kinder weak-voiced like, 'Red, I'm goin, to kick de bucket; but I ain't afeard. We git gold fur de papers up dere,' pointin' to de sky.

"His mudder was a cryin.' Don't cry, mudder. Dey tells me in de Sunday school dat dere will be no sorrow up dere. Sing me de song outen de book, mudder.' De poor mudddder; she's a widdy women, an' takes in washin' fur a liven,' but Whitney gin her all his money, an' her heart is broke since he passed in his checks. Whitey was a square one—he was. Just as squre as a noose-paper. He wouldn't see nobody posed upon. I seen him lick Bill one day when he tried to hunt my little brudder. An' when Whitey would make an extra stake and buy a cake or some taffy he'd always divy wid some of de boys. Dere wus nothin' mean 'bout him."

Honeymoon Hints.

In Siam it is the custom for husbands to gamble away their wives. Every sort of plan has to be resorted to where there is no well equipped system of divorce.

A rainy day picnic and a broken marriage engagement are in one respect alike—postponed on account of the weder.—[Burdette.

Girls of marriageable age are worth $10 apiece in Japan, with few takers.

Many of the most charming women that a man meets in society are among the last women he would ever have the courrge to marry, is the opinion of a bashful philosopher.

A Jersey City girl is at work on a crazy quilt composed of small pieces clipped from the silk linings of her many admirers' over-coats.

Four and twenty bridesmaids all in a row,
That's the latest fashion for the best wedding Co.
When the bride was married the maids began to sing;
Wasn't that a wedding march to set before a king?
Oh! sweet is the morning of pure wedded love.
When joy gilds existence, when faith is unshaken.
Alas! that the joy should so transient prove,
That from the bright dream we must some day awaken.
Time brings us at last to the gall in the cup;
Life loses the glow of affection's adorning,
When quarrels ensue as to who shall get up
And kindle the fire on a cold winter morning.

A debating society is discussing the question: "Should a woman be allowed to have the last word?" It seems to us that this is a profitless discussion, for no matter how the question is decided women will still continue to have the last word.

An Indian girl 14 years of age is the "boss" breadmaker at Lewiston, Idaho.

"No," said an old maid, "I don't miss a husband very much. I have trained my dog to growl every time I feed him, and I have just bough a clothing-store dummy that I can scold when I feel like it."

Holy Tattooing.

The custom of tattooing the body formerly existed in all parts of Polynesia, but is now generally abandoned, except among the ruder islanders. The process was substantially as follows:

The artist first drew the desired pattern upon the body of his subject; then taking a fine-toothed comb, made of shell or bone, he dipped it into a liquid composed of the pulverized coal of the candle-nut and oil, and placing it on the spot caused it to puncture the skin by a blow with a mallet. Soon a bluish color appeared under the skin, which did not fade for many years. The first marks were made about the time of puberty, but so painful, and even dangerous, was the process that it was not finished at once, but the pattern was elaborated year after year up to advanced age. The designs were mostly arrangements of curved lines, showing great artistic skill and appearing to the eye like a drapery of fine lace work. Often figures of men, birds, dogs, fishes or other objects were pictured. The extent of the person covered by tattoo varied on different groups, but the thighs were invariably marked. High chiefs were exempt from the custom, as were the lowest class of freemen, slaves, and to a great extent women. Various theories have been proposed to account for the practice, but the only satisfactory one finds its ground in religion. The figures of living objects, so common are the tokens of the individual or tribe in which guardian spirits are believed to reside. The operator is always a priest, and the patient is tabu "holy" during the process. The primitive idea seems to have been that by drawing the visible emblem of a deity upon the person his favor was thereby secured. Later this conception faded out, and the custom came to be simply a mode of ornamentation or mark of social distinction. The chiefs were not tattooed because, themselves partaking of the divine nature, they did not require it, and the rest were exempt because they did not deserve it.

Black Bass Fishing.

I make a long cast, and, as much by luck as skill, deliver my minnow, now almost at his gasp, in the middle of the concentric rings of wavelets. Scarcely has his fall startled the reflections of bank, bush, and grass-tuft to livelier dancing, when the surface is again broken by a sullen seething, in the midst of which is dimly seen the shining green broadside of a bass. The time given him for gorging the bait seems nearer five minutes than the quarter of one during which the line vibrates with slight jerks and then tightens with a steady pull as I strike, and an angry tug tells me that he is fast. Now the line cuts the water with a tremulous swish, and the rod bends like a bulrush in a gale, as the stricken fish battles up stream in a wide sweep, then shoots to the surface and three feet into the air, an emerald rocket showering pearls and crystals. I do not know whether I let my "rod straighten" or "pull him over into the water," but somehow he gets back there without having rid himself of the barbed unpleasantness in his jaw, and then makes a rush down stream, varied with sharp zigzags, ending in another aerial flight as unavailing as the first. Then he bore his way toward a half-sunken log, thinking to swim under it and so get a dead strain on the line; but a steady pull stops him just short of it. Then he sounds the depth to rub the hook out on the bottom, for he is a fellow of expedients; but the spring of the rod lifts him above this last help. He has exhausted his devices and now makes feeble rushes in small circles and zigzags and a final nerveless leap not half his length out of water. He has fought valiantly for life and liberty, but fortune has been against him. After a few more abortive struggles, he turns up his side to the sky, and is towed, almost unresistingly, along the bank. Ruisses him out triumphantly, swearing, Catholic though he is, by a Puritan saint: "Ba John Roger! dat's de bes' 'snago I have ketch in my remember!"

Curious Watches.

In the South Kensington Museum at London is a small watch about 100 years old, representing an apple, the golden case ornamented with grains of pearl. Another old Nuremburg watch has the form of an acorn and is provided with a dainty pistol which perhaps served as an alarm.

In London is an eagle-faced watch which, when the body of the bird is opened, a richly enameled face is seen. They are sometimes found in the form of ducks and skulls.

The Bishop of Ely had a watch in the head of his cane, and a Prince of Saxony had one in his riding saddles. A watch made for Catherine I. of Russia is a repeater and a musical watch. Within is the Holy Sepulcher and the Roman Guard. By touching a spring the stones move away from the door, the guards kneel down, angels appear, and the holy women step into the tomb and sing the Easter song that is heard in the Russian Churches.

King George III. of England had a watch not larger than a five-cent piece which had 120 parts, the whole not weighing quite as much as a ten-cent piece.

Man, being essentially active, must find in activity his joy, as well as his beauty and glory; and labor, like every thing else that is good, is its own reward.

The Rain Tree.

[Land and Water.]

Some travelers in South America, in traversing an arid and desolate tract of country, were struck with a strange contrast. On one side there was a barren desert, on the other a rich and luxuriant vegetation.

The French Consul at Loreto, Mexico says that this remarkable contrast is due to the presence of the Tamai capsi, or the rain tree. This tree grows to the height of sixty feet, with a diameter of three feet at its base, and possesses the power of strongly attracting, absorbing, and condensing the humidity of the atmosphere. Water is always to be seen dripping from its trunk in such quantity as to convert the surrounding soil into a veritable marsh. It is in summer especially, when the rivers are nearly dried up, that the tree is most active.

If this admirable quality of the rain tree were utilized in the arid regions near the equator, the people there living in misery on account of the unproductive soil, would derive great advantages from its introduction, as well as the people of more favored countries where the climate is dry and droughts frequent.

Deaf Mutes.

Among the ancient Greeks deaf mutes were looked upon as a disgrace to humanity, and under the barbarous laws of Lycurgus they were exposed to death. Nor was highly cultured Athens less cruel than Sparta toward these unfortunate creatures. Deaf mute children were pitilessly sacrificed without a voice being heard on their behalf, Aristotle declared congenital deaf mutes to be incapable of instruction, and this was the universal opinion of classical antiquity. The Romans treated the unfortunates with the same cruelty as the Greeks. As soon as a child was found deaf and dumb it was sacrificed to the Tiber. Only those escaped whom the waves washed back to the shore, or whom the natural love of their parents kept hidden from the eyes of the world.

Mustard.

The wild mustard in South California is like that spoken of in the New Testament, in the branches of which the birds of the air may rest. Coming up out of the earth, so slender a stem that dozens can find starting point in an inch, it darts up a slender, straight shoot, five, ten, twenty feet, with hundreds of fine feathery branches, locking and interlocking with all the hundreds around it, till it is an inextricable net-work like lace. Then it bursts into yellow bloom still finer, more feathery and lace-like. At times it looks like golden dust. With a clear blue sky behind it, as is often seen, it looks like a golden snow storm.

"I believe those 'chilled plows' used by farmers are what cause crops to be so backward," remarked Mr. Knowitall as he stood in front of an agricultural store. "Yes," said the clerk, "and these seeding machines are what make the crops go to seed." Knowitall can't imagine what made the honest old granger who had just purchased a machine, laugh so hearty.

Sawdust.

The sawdust and refuse of sawmills is now made to yield fourteen gallons of turpentine, three or four gallons of resin and a quantity of tar per cord.

Lumber Drying.

The process of drying lumber by surrounding it with common salt is just now attracting attention. The peculiar power of salt for extracting moisture is well known.

A Californian's Opinion of Women.

[San Francisco Argonaut.]

Women seldom like the expression of a moral sentiment from a man. If innocent themselves, they are impatient; if guilty, the man becomes a gravestone in their eyes. It is only when they have suffered, and just escaped sinning, that they listen with respectful admiration.

Plate Glass.

Plate-glass was discovered in an accidental way, in 1688, by a man named Thevart. It is attributed to the breaking of a vessel containing melted glass, a portion of which found its way under a large flag-stone, which, when subsequently removed, was found to consist of a plate of glass. This suggested the idea of casting glass in plates.

Age of the Moon.

"Why do you suppose the feminine is used in speaking of the moon?" asked Kosciusko Murphy of Miss Esmeralda Longcoffin.

"Because she is so beautiful, I suppose," replied Esmeralda, who is on the shady side of 35.

"No, it's because there is no finding out how old she is," replied the lunatic.

A Correction.

"Yes, brethren," says the clergyman who is preaching the funeral sermon, "our deceased brother was cut down in a single night—torn from the arms of his loving wife, who is thus left a disconsolate widow, at the early age of 24 years." "Twenty-two, if you please," sobs the widow, in the front pew, emerging from her handkerchief for an instant.

A Scotch Test.

[London Letter.]

The duke of Argyll was once giving evidence before a committee of the House of Commons on the temperance question. "But," said a member inquiringly, "one Bailie MacPherson, apparently a person of authority, deposes that he never saw any one drunk in his district?" "Very likely," replied His Grace, "Scotchmen will hardly allow a man to be drunk so long as he can lie still on the floor."

Good Reasons.

I suspect we underrate the Mongol. The Celestial, with all his ignorance, has his share of shrewdness. When some American capitalists were endeavoring to get the consent of the Chinese mandarins to develop the coal fields of China, their answer was, at least, not without diplomatic skill:

"No, we cannot permit it. First, it will displace the center of gravity and the world will tumble over; second, if it is a good thing for you it is good for us."

Don't Marry.

Don't marry a lazy man. There are some young men who are so lazy that it almost requires an artist to draw their breath. They seemingly have not ambition enough to labor under an impression. They live off the earnings of their pa until they find a girl who is fool enough to marry them, and they will live off her pa. Look where you are going. Don't marry a man who has spent his all in riotous living, and tells you that he is now going to get married and settle up. Don't marry a man who has not the wherewith to support you. You cannot live on love. "When poverty somes in at the door, love flies out through the window."

Chinese ladies wear robes of silk of any or every color—their frightful little feet protrude from the legs of a straight pair of satin pantaloons—much like the European garment in form. The custom of martyrizing the feet always affects the legs, which invariably become thin, atrophied, or deformed.

"Why do you always look at the corners of the paintings, my dear?" asked a fond mother, who, with her daughter, was visiting an exhibition of the Old Masters. "I want to see the artist's name first, mamma," was the reply; "and then I know whether I am to admire the painting or not."

A cynical old bachelor, who firmly believes that all women have something to say on all subjects, recently asked a female friend: "Well, madame, what do you hold on this question of female suffrage?" To him the lady responded camly: "Sir, I hold my tongue!"

Strictly English titles of honor have no feminine form, and in early Saxon times when women were of small account, a wife like the spouse of the historic Yankee squire was the "same fool she always was." Even the queen was but cwen, or woman.

"What is your opinion, sir, about divorce?" "Madam, I accept divorce as a necessary compromise; but I say without hesitation, that for a really noble mind, a soul capable of delicate emotions, divorce can never hold a candle to widerhood."

Hygienic pillows are now in vogue. Three form a full equipment for a bed, of which one is filled with hops, a second with pine needles, and a third with marine moss. They are believed to cure sleeplessness and nervous disorders.

A Brooklyn man, who was angered by his wife's neglect to mend his pantaloons, hung them out of a front window of his residence, with a placard on them stating that fact, and ascribing it to laziness on her part.

The young man who wrote to his offended girl, asking her to send him "a line," informing him what she would like him to do, was surprised to receive by express a clothes-line with a noose at one end.

The soundest argument will produce no more conviction in an empty head than the most superficial declaration, as a feather and guinea fall with equal velocity in a vacuum.

We seldom find persons whom we acknowledge to be possessed of good sense except those who agree with us in opinion.

A Queer Present.

A London merchant, late in the last century, was stopped by some gentlemen on the road, when crossing Hounslow Hearth one dark night, and duly relieved of $600, in gold, besides his watch and jewelry. At parting the courteous and considerate highwaymen presented the merchant, as a souvenir of their meeting and of the interesting fact that he had been relieved of his incumbrances, with a gilt-edged copy of the New Testament!

Magnetic Hammers.

Hammers, the heads of which are magnetized so as to attract nails, for facilitating the making of rough boxes for packing fruit are now used on the continent. We remember using magnetized tack hammers, so long as twenty-five years ago; but, although the heads were protected by a piece of India rubber tube, they soon lost their magnetism. Certainly, we omitted to place them at night due north and south, parallel with the main direction of the earth's magnetism, which is perhaps the reason of their failure.

Making a Cup of Coffee.

According to Lamartine, "it is the hardest thing in the world to do the simple things in life and do them right. Who can keep his temper? Who knows how to control his appetite? Where is the man who can hold his tongue? Who knows how to forgive an injury? Where is happiness to be found? What man knows how to live?" and where is the woman who can make good coffee? It must be one of the hard simple things that Lamartine refers to, for where there are a score of housewives who can make firm jellies and delicious preserves and pastries, there is not one who can be depended on for good coffee 365 days in the year.

The Brain a Scrap-Book.

[San Francisco Chronicle.]

What is the brain but a scrap-book? If, when we are asleep some one could peep in there, what would he find? Lines from favorite poets, stray bits of tunes and snatches from songs, melodies from operas, sentences from books, strange meaningless dates, recollections of childhood vague and gradually growing faint, moments of perfect happiness, hours of despair and misery. The first kiss of childhood lovers, the first parting of bosom friends, the word of praise or the word of blame of a fond mother, pictures of men and women, hopes and dreams that came to nothing, unrequited kindnesses, gratitude for favors, quarrels and reconciliations, old jokes, and through them all the thread of one deep and enduring passion for some one man or woman that may have been a misery or a delight.

Telegraphist's Blunders.

Many blunders occur in the transmission of telegraph messages. The mistakes, as a rule, occur with the operator who receives the messages, and it is generally on a busy wire, over which 200 or 300 messages are received daily. The wires between Philadelphia and New York do the heaviest work. Some of the errors quoted at the main office of the Western Union company recently read as follows: "William Gill & Pie" for "William Gillespie," "Do not send the money" for "Do not send testimony," "Meet me with hearse and carriage," which should have read, "Meet me with horse and carriage," "Dr. A. Wing, room car conductor," instead of "Drawing-room car conductor," "Pancake, Belts & Co." for "Hancock, Beals & Co." Reserve me a room in Astor House" read "Reserve me a room in store house."

Put This in Your Pipe.

[New York Graphic.]

The excessive use of tobacco causes insanity, but seldom where the victim would not become insane anyhow.

Poets are nearly all smokers. This doesn't necessarily indicate there is anything wrong with tobacco, however.

It is injurious for a man to smoke who always borrows a cigar and a match. The injury is confined principally to his friends.

Sir Walter Raleigh once asked Queen Elizabeth to smoke his pipe. She tried it once, and only once. It is a significant fact that inside of a year she ordered his head to be cut off.

Amurath IV. of Turkey made the offense of smoking punishable by death. As nearly all the officials of the land smoked he was furnished an excuse for chopping their heads off, which was much cheaper than hiring an assassin to put them out of the way.

A New Kind of Dog.

A mild-looking man who resmbled one who had wrestled with misfortune in a catch-as-chatch-can hold and been thrown in the contest, went into a Woodward avenue bird store the other day and approached the affable proprietor.

"Look here," he said, "may I take you apart for a moment?"

"Certainly," replied the man of animals, "if you can put me together again."

"Well, here's a letter from my wife—say, come out and have something?"

They went and had something; when they came back the wild-looking man resumed the letter. "She writes me," he continued "to get her a white canvas-back dog in cross——"

"Now you go," said the bird man severely. "Business is business, and I've no time to fool away."

He sat down on the curbstone to rest. He was still reading the letter when a sympathetic lady stopped to look at him.

"Poor man, are you ill?" she asked kindly."

"Heaven bless you, madam, read that letter. If you can and will, I am a saved man."

The lady took the letter as if she were humoring the whim of a lunatic and ran it over.

"It is easy enough to read," she said. "Your wife, who seems to be an excellent woman, wishes you to buy her a white dog in cross-stitch, stamped on a canvas splasher, with crewels to finish it, and send by express at once. I'm sure there's nothing about it that isn't plain enough."

"Thank you, ma'am. I'll never forget your kindness. Where did you say the cross-stitched dog on canvas could be found?"

"At any art-embroidery store," and the lady walked away, remarking sotto voce:

"Of all stupids, men are the stupidest. Not to know what cross-stitch is!"